

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 230752
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AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY
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UNCLAS STATE 230752

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TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 12 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL
INTEREST

1. SYNDICATED COLUMNIST MARQUIS CHILDS, WRITING IN WASHINGTON POST, SAID HOWEVER MUCH OUTCOME OF CAMP DAVID SUMMIT
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PAGE 02 STATE 230752

MAY ADD OR DETRACT FROM PRESIDENT CARTER'S REPUTATION AS
PEACEMAKER, STILL ANOTHER TEST -- LONG-STALLED SALT TWO
NEGOTIATIONS -- "PROMISES TO WEIGH MORE HEAVILY IN BAL-
ANCE." CHILDS SAID "FROM AN INFORMED SOURCE, ONE WHO
FOLLOWS THESE MATTERS CLOSELY FROM DAY TO DAY, COMES RE-
PORT OF YET ANOTHER STALL -- OR, RATHER, SERIES OF STALLS
THAT WILL CHECKMATE TREATY WITH ALL FIERCE CONTROVERSY IT

IS BOUND TO AROUSE FROM EMBARRASSING PRESIDENT AS HE PREPARES, AT LOW POINT IN POLLS, FOR REELECTIO'. AS ONE OF TOP WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS PUTS IT, 'EVERYTHING WE'RE DOING HAS JUST ONE AIM, AND THAT IS REELECTION.' OPINIONS CANNVASSSED OVER PAST YEAR AGAINST THEIR CRITERION SHOW THAT NO-TREATY RESULT WOULD NOT DAMAGE PRESIDENT AND MIGHT EVEN HELP HIM, SHOWING HIM AS STRONG MAN DETERMINED NOT TO YIELD TO SOVIET BLANDISHMENTS. ON OTHER HAND, TREATY REJECTED BY SENATE -- PROBABILITY TODAY -- WOULD BE MOST DAMAGING. AROUND DEFEAT, EVEN NARROW DEFEAT, ALL PASSIONS STIRRED BY LAST-DITCH OPPONENTS, BY PENTAGON AND BY

THOSE CHAMPIONING SOVIET DISSIDENTS WOULD BOIL. CARTER WOULD BE IN MIDDLE OF NO-WIN CONTEST. SO, AS THIS REPORT GOES, THERE WILL BE NO TREATY SIGNED IN 1978. IN 1979 NEW HAMPSHIRE PRIMARIES WILL BE SCARCELY MORE THAN YEAR AWAY, AND WITH RONALD REAGAN POUNDING ON 'DEFENSELESS AMERICA' THEME IT WILL HARDLY MEET REELECTION TEST FOR CARTER TO EMBRACE LEONID BREZHNEV AT TREATY-SIGNING CEREMONY. THEREFORE, THERE WILL BE NO TREATY NEXT YEAR, AND CERTAINLY NOT IN 1980. WHILE THAT SOUNDS WILD, IT MATCHES STERN REALITIES CARTER FACES. THERE IS ONLY ONE QUESTION: WILL SOVIETS PLAY THIS GAME OF STALL? ANSWER OF OBSERVERS WHO SEE IT THIS WAY IS YES. SOVIETS HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE, AND POSTPONING ANY DECISION ON CRUISE MISSILE AND ITS RANGE WILL CAUSE NEITHER SIDE ANY PAIN." CHILDS SAID "ONE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 230752

INDIRECT BENEFIT IS TO ROB SUCH ANTI-SALT DOUBTERS AND CRUSADERS AS SEN. HENRY M. JACKSON AND PAUL NITZE, FORMER DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, OF AN ISSUE.... THERE ARE THOSE WHO WILL BE DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED IF CARTER FAILS TO COME UP WITH ANY FORM OF LIMITING AGREEMENT. BUT SO FAR AS VOTER STRENGTH GOES -- THAT FUNDAMENTAL GOAL OF REELECTION -- THEY ARE NOT MAJOR FACTOR. WHILE THEY MIGHT STAY HOME ON ELECTION DAY, IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE THEM VOTING FOR CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICAN OPPOSED TO ANY AND ALL TRAFFIC WITH SOVIET UNION." CHILDS CONCEDES THAT THIS MAY BE FAR TOO PESSIMISTIC. HE POINTED OUT THAT VANCE CONSISTENTLY HAS HELD TO BELIEF THAT SALT TREATY WILL BE SIGNED, AND THAT WARNKE HAS PUT MONTHS OF EFFORT INTO TALKING OUT DETAILS OF AN AGREEMENT. "SO PROPHETS OF DESPAIR MAY BE SUFFERING MERELY AN END-OF-SUMMER GLOOM. MEETINGS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST STILL GO ON, AND REPORTS OF COMINGS AND GOINGS OF NEGOTIATORS HAVE AN OPTIMISTIC NOTE INDICATING THAT FINAL DETAILS ARE BEING WORKED OUT. BUT FOR CARTER, TREATY REQUIRING TWO-THIRDS VOTE FOR RATIFICATION BY SENATE IS VERY HIGH HURDLE INDEED."

2. WILLIAM BEECHER OF BOSTON GLOBE REPORTED THAT CARTER

ADMINISTRATION HAS PASSED WORD TO SOVIETS THAT ITS LATEST SALT PROPOSALS "REPRESENT ITS 'BOTTOM LINE,' NOT JUST ANOTHER BARGAINING POSITION." BEECHER SAID THIS WORD, ACCORDING TO SENIOR OFFICIALS, WAS OUTLINED IN MOSCOW LAST WEEK BY WARNKE DELEGATION. HE SAID ADMINISTRATION IS KNOWN TO BE LOOKING TO UPCOMING VANCE-GROMYKO TALKS AS "CRITICAL TEST OF WHETHER RUSSIANS BELIEVE THIS MESSAGE AND STILL ARE ANXIOUS TO CONCLUDE NEW SALT AGREEMENT THIS YEAR." HE QUOTED ONE RANKING OFFICIAL AS SAYING "IF SOVIETS REALLY WANT SALT TWO TREATY THIS YEAR, GROMYKO WILL BRING SOME REAL CONCESSIONS WITH HIM. IF NOT, CHANCES OF ANY AGREEMENT IN 1978 WILL BE MINISCULE." BEECHER SAID WARNKE WENT TO MOSCOW WITH VERY DETAILED GUIDANCE FROM NSC "SO HE

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PAGE 04 STATE 230752

COULD RESPOND TO ANY REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION THAT MIGHT ARISE IN MOSCOW. BUT BECAUSE SOME ELEMENTS OF BUREAUCRACY WERE DETERMINED TO SEE THAT WARNKE DIDN'T STRAY ONE IOTA FROM HIS INSTRUCTIONS, IT WAS AGREED THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF DEFENSE DEPARTMENT, JCS AND NSC STAFF WOULD ACCOMPANY WARNKE EVEN THOUGH NO NEGOTIATIONS WERE TO TAKE PLACE IN MOSCOW." BEECHER SAID ONE KEY ELEMENT OF U.S. EFFORT TO BREAK DEADLOCK OVER MISSILE MODERNIZATION IS TO PROPOSE THAT SOVIET UNION AND U.S. EACH BE PERMITTED TO TEST AND DEPLOY ONE NEW LAND-BASED ICBM AND ONE NEW SUBMARINE-BASED MISSILE. NO OTHER NEW MISSILES COULD BE TESTED OR DEPLOYED BY EITHER SIDE AND AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE REACHED ON HOW MUCH MODERNIZATION WOULD BE PERMITTED FOR EXISTING MISSILES TO ENSURE THAT MAJOR NEW CAPABILITIES WERE FORESTALLED, BEECHER SAID. GLOBE REPORTER SAID U.S. INTRODUCED "NEW COMPLICATION" INTO SALT NEGOTIATIONS LAST SUMMER WHEN U.S. INFORMED SOVIETS THAT NOTHING IN TREATY WOULD BE REGARDED AS PRECLUDING U.S. FROM DEPLOYING MAP BASING SYSTEM "RUSSIANS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR," HE SAID, "THAT THEY DON'T LIKE THIS IDEA AND THIS COULD BECOME AN IMPORTANT ISSUE IN VANCE-GROMYKO TALKS."

3. WASHINGTON POST REPORTED FROM UNITED NATIONS THAT GROMYKO ASKED IN LETTER TO SECRETARY GENERAL THAT GENERAL ASSEMBLY TAKE UP "DRAFT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON STRENGTHENING OF GUARANTEES OF SECURITY OF NON-NUCLEAR STATES" IN ITS SESSION STARTING SEPT. 19. CHRISTOPHER

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